



Invitation

Thursday, 15 April 2010, 6 pm

The Return of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel

Lecture by Gabriel Piterberg

In this original and wide-ranging study, Gabriel Piterberg examines the ideology and literature behind the colonization of Palestine, from the late nineteenth century to the present. Exploring Zionism's origins in Central-Eastern European nationalism and settler movements, he shows how its texts can be placed within a wider discourse of western colonization. Piterberg revisits the work of Theodor Herzl, Gershom Scholem, Anita Shapira and David Ben-Gurion, among other thinkers influential in the formation of the Zionist myth, to break open prevailing views of Zionism. He demonstrates that it was in fact unexceptional, expressing a consciousness and imagination typical of colonial settler movement. Shaped by European ideological currents and the realities of colonial life, Zionism constructed its own story as a unique and impregnable one, in the process excluding the voices of an indigenous people— the Palestinian Arabs.

"This thoroughly researched and engaging book provides an intellectual, cultural and literary fulcrum from which Zionist ideology and practice can be read afresh. ...This book is essential reading for everyone who is interested in the history of Zionism as well as the history of nationalist movements." — Yehouda Shenhav, Professor of Sociology, Tel-Aviv University

Gabriel Piterberg teaches history at UCLA, and has taught at St Antony's and Balliol Colleges, Oxford. His previous books include *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*. He writes for the *New Left Review* and the *London Review of Books*.

The discussion will be moderated by Prof. Marc Baer (ZMO).

Venue:

Zentrum für Literatur-
und Kulturforschung

Schützenstraße 18
10117 Berlin

Raum 308

GEFÖRDERT VOM



Bundesministerium
für Bildung
und Forschung

The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel, Gabriel Piterberg 38. Palestine and the Palestinians in the 21st Century, Edited by Rochelle Davis and Mimi Kirk 39. The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine and Iraq, Derek Gregory 40. Palestine and Israel: A Challenge to Justice by John Quigley 41. Palestine and the ArabIsraeli Conflict by Charles Dr. Smith 42. Israel and Latin America: The Military Connection by Bishara Bahbah 43. The Passionate Attachment: America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present by Ball, George W. and Douglas B. 44. Peace for Palesti I am fighting today Jewish fundamentalism in "The Founding Myths of Israeli Politics" at the risk of attracting the thunder of those Israeli-Zionists who did not like Rabbi Hirsch's reminder: "Zionism wants to define the Jewish people as a national entity which is a heresy."Â Transposing this "mighty Legend" of the "Return" into historical reality, he declared: "Palestine is our unforgettable historical homeland ...Â This opposition to political Zionism, inspired by the attachment to the spirituality of the Jewish faith, did not cease from expressing itself. Following W.W.II, using the U.N. and at the same time taking advantage of rivalries among nations and, especially, of the unconditional support of the United States, Israeli Zionism managed to impose itself as a dominant force. Zionism is one of the most contentious ideas, freighted with emotion by both partisans and detractor.Â A Time to Speak Out: Independent Jewish Voices on Israel, Zionism and Jewish Identity. Edited by Anne Karpf, Brian Klug, Jacqueline Rose and Barbara Rosenbaum. Verso, 310pp, Â£9.99.Â Verso, 432pp, Â£19.99. The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel. Gabriel Piterberg. Verso, 298pp, Â£16.99.